

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
2 June 2005 (02.06.2005)

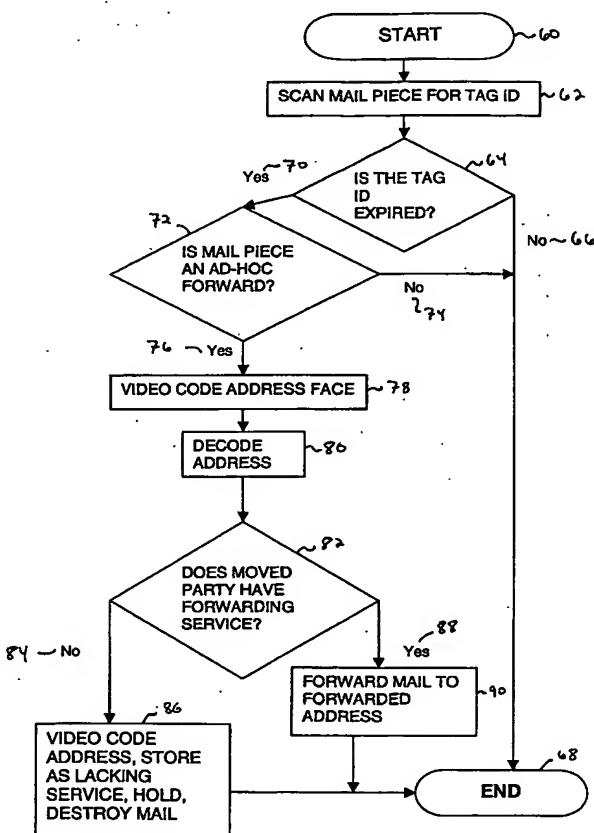
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/049232 A1

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **B07C 3/00**,
G07B 17/02
- (21) International Application Number:
PCT/EP2004/012915
- (22) International Filing Date:
15 November 2004 (15.11.2004)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
60/520,658 18 November 2003 (18.11.2003) US
- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):
SIEMENS AG [DE/DE]; Wittelsbacherplatz 2, 80333
München (DE).
- (72) Inventor; and
(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **ROSENBAUM, Wal-
ter** [US/FR]; 3, rue Eugene Labiche, F-75116 Paris (FR).
- (74) Agent: **FISCHER, Michael**; c/o Siemens AG, Postfach
22 16 34, 80506 München (DE).
- (81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM,
TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM,
ZW.
- (84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR FORWARDING A MAIL ITEM



(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to a system and method for forwarding articles such as mail pieces. In operation, an initial determination is made as to whether the article has been previously handled and is subject to a redirection or ad hoc forwarding. If the article is subject to as hoc forwarding, another determination is made whether the article recipient has maintained an account to cover the expense of the forwarding. If no account is present, the recipient is given the option, for a limited time, to establish such an account. If no account is established within that time, the article is not delivered and may be destroyed. If an account is present, the article is forwarded and the account debited.

WO 2005/049232 A1



ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

Published:

— *with international search report*